BLAK STAR

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

Sydney, Australia Vol.1 No.2 1987

Paper of the
ANARCHIST STUDENTS UNION

USER PAYS EDUCATION

Much of the recent fees debate has been centered around one issue: Free, accessible, education for the members of all social classes. This has been the slogan and motivation of "the left" in the debate, while from "the right" has come the cry of "Who is going to pay?".

The argument goes something like this:
The left claims that the institution of fees tends to exclude those who can't afford to pay such fees. It therefore follows, when one pursues such logic, that to charge fees is discriminatory and only contributes to the widening gap between the classes.

From the right comes a hard-line pragmatic approach to what is perceived as an economic question. It is expensive to educate a student (about $8000-$10000 per year). Should workers, along with the wealthy, subsidise a largely ruling-class student body through taxation? It would seem that the only solution is that those who receive the benefit of an education (be they ruling-class, working-class or otherwise) should pay for the privilege. The term "user pays" comes easily to the lips of most right-wing proponents of fees as the perfect counter to any "obnoxious" left-wing argument.

Of course the user pays argument is one that is just. The problem with the argument is one of definition. "User pays" always makes the assumption that the student is the user of his or her education. This, as a premise, is obviously incorrect.

The university as a seat of learning and of intellectual excellence, is of a bygone period. A modern economy demands the mass production of students who are not educated (in the liberal tradition) and have been rendered incapable of individual or original thinking. The university has become a society for the propagation of ignorance; "high culture" has taken on the rhythm of the production line, the aim being to turn out slaves to the capitalist system; people who will support the system and the state that produced them. An army of such people are infinitely more important to the state than their meagre education will ever be to themselves. For the state, the cost of a student's education is a small price to pay to guarantee that they will always have the blind support of the nation's intellectual elite.

In addition to this there is also the false belief that the "customer" always gets what she or he wants. It is this inability of educational institutions to offer courses which are relevant to student's lives that underlines the major failing of the state system; specialisation.

Students, forced from Year Ten onwards to specialise in one field, are actually being deskilled in the everyday activities necessary for existance. People are forced to rely upon other specialists, and ultimately the state, to survive in the capitalist system.

Produced by the Propaganda Collective.

BLAK STAR

CONTRIBUTIONS

We want BLAK STAR to be more than just an advertisment for Anarchist groups, so if you have anything you think might be relevant, say an article on animal liberation, women's issues, or anything, send it to the "ANARCHIST STUDENTS UNION" BOX 92 MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS COUNCIL.

A NEW DEAL FOR VEGETARIANS

Macquarie University's Vego Club and the ASU are introducing a new food co-op.

The deal is this:

$4 per case of veges or $8 per doublecase.

$4 per case of fruit.

The only condition on this co-op is that the members of the co-op will be expected to put in some work (only a couple of hours every month or so; if that!

If you are interested you'll have to place your order, with the correct money, with Bronwyn at the Students Council Enquiry desk (level 0 of the Union Building) by 12 midday on each Tuesday. The goods can then be picked up from Council on the afternoon of the following Thursday.

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JURA BOOKS

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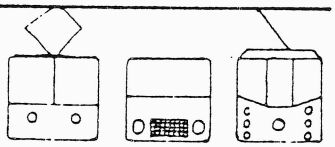

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